STARLIN·APARO·DE CARLO
BATMAN
THE NEW ADVENTURES
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APARO & SEAN

WHITE GOLD AND TRUTH

ONE YEAR AGO.
NO MATTER WHAT I SAY, ROBIN LIKES TO GO IT ON HIS OWN WHENEVER HE GETS THE CHANCE.
THE TROUBLE IS THAT HE'S NOWHERE NEAR AS GOOD AS HE THINKS HE IS.
HE'S NEW AT THIS DANGEROUS GAME. THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF TRICKS HE'S YET TO LEARN.
THAT'S HOW HE ENDED UP IN THAT MESS LAST NIGHT.

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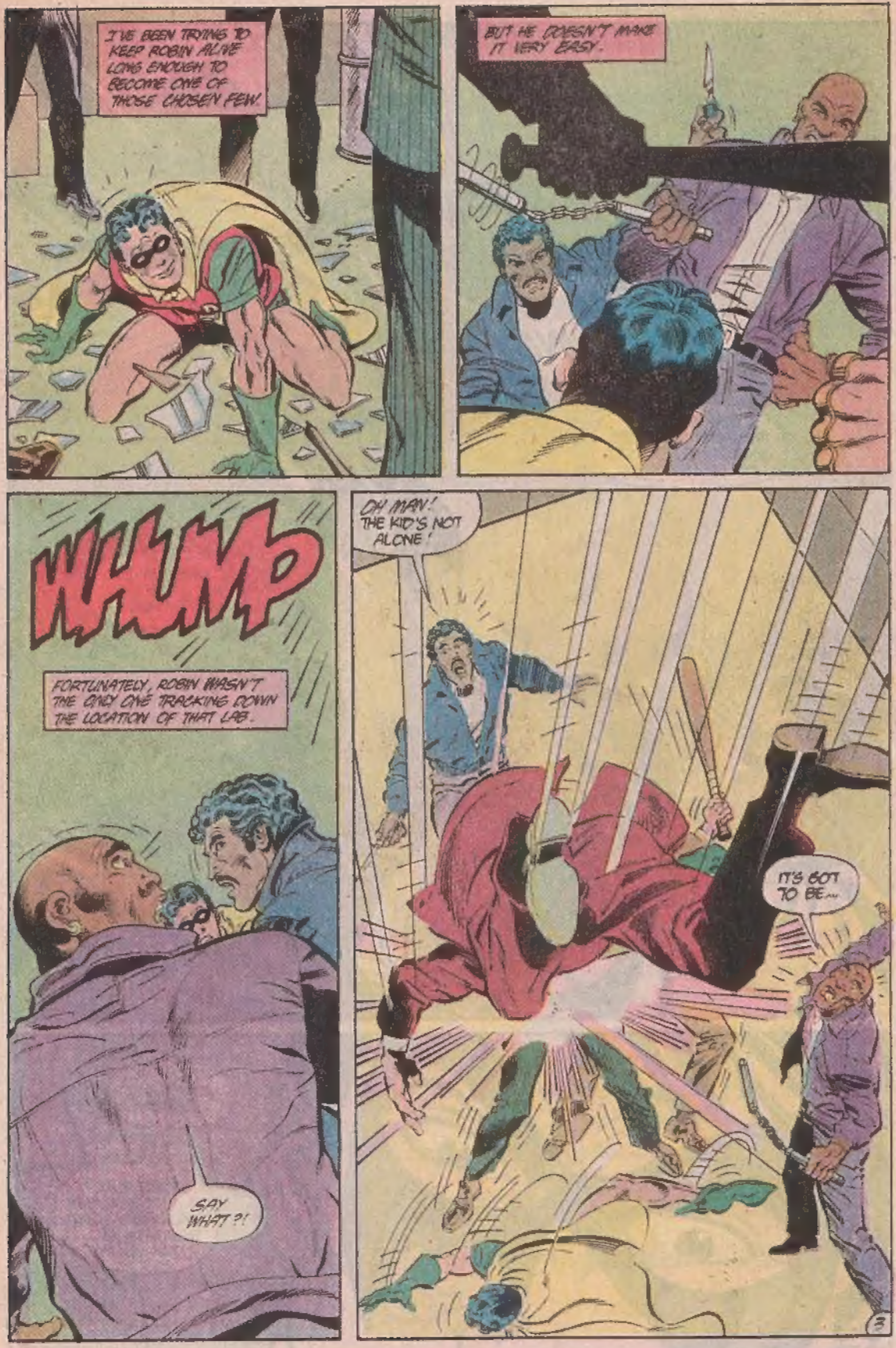
HE'D TRAILED A DEALER TO THE COKE LAB.
ROBIN WAS SO PLEASED WITH HIS DISCOVERY THAT HE GOT CARELESS.
HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN A SETUP LIKE THAT WOULD HAVE GUARDS POSTED OUTSIDE.
ESPECIALLY ON THE ROOF.
SLOPPY.
VERY SLOPPY.
IN THIS BUSINESS, YOU DON'T USUALLY LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO REALIZE YOUR MISTAKES.
THE PENALTIES FOR FOULING UP ARE HIGH...
THAT'S WHY ONLY THE BEST SURVIVE.
2


I'VE BEEN TRYING TO KEEP ROBIN ALIVE LONG ENOUGH TO BECOME ONE OF THOSE CHOSEN FEW.
BUT HE DOESN'T MAKE IT VERY EASY.
WHUMP
FORTUNATELY, ROBIN WASN'T THE ONLY ONE TRACKING DOWN THE LOCATION OF THAT LAB.
SAY WHAT?!
OH MAN! THE KID'S NOT ALONE!
IT'S GOT TO BE...
3

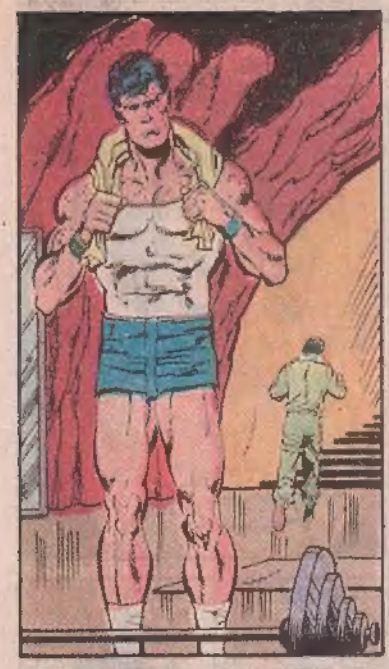
MY NAME'S NIGHTWING!
I MAY NOT BE THE GENT YOU WERE EXPECTING, BUT LET ME ASSURE YOU...
...LIKE HIM, I'M THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES.
SO DON'T GET STUPID!
IF YOU PLAY IT COOL, YOU MAY WALK AWAY FROM THIS WITH ALL YOUR TEETH.
4

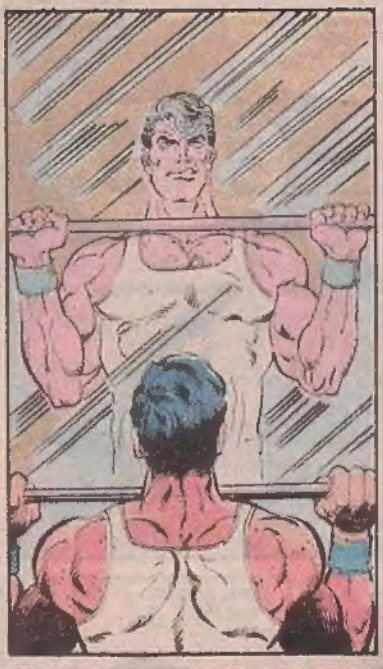
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

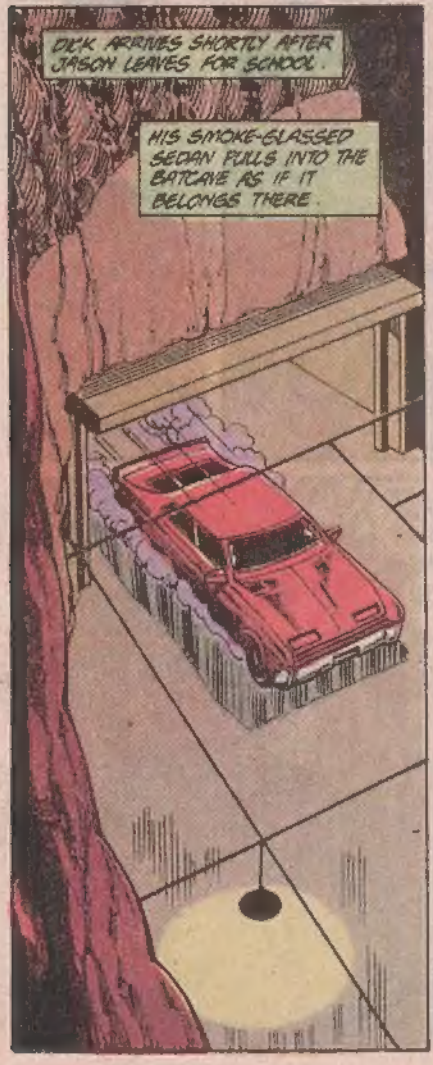
DON'T GET TOUGH WITH US, DUDE!
WE AIN'T THE ONE GOT CAUGHT TRESPASSING.
WHAT?!
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PULL?
ANY FOOL CAN SEE THAT THIS IS A COCAINE PROCESSING LAB!
OH YEAH? MIND TELLING ME WHERE THE BLOW IS?
I BELIEVE MY YOUNG FRIEND HAS MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.
BUT... BUT...
THIS SHOULD MORE THAN COVER THE DAMAGES. WE'LL BE GOING NOW. ANY OBJECTIONS?
I DIDN'T THINK SO.
WE CAN'T... I MEAN...
DON'T SAY ANOTHER WORD.
NOW WHAT WAS ALL THAT ABOUT, PAL?
JUST TRYING TO SAVE YOU FROM MAKING A BIG MISTAKE, SHORTY.
MISTAKE?!
YOU CAN'T BUST ANYONE FOR POSSESSION IF THERE'S NO DOPE TO BE FOUND.
WE DIDN'T EVEN SEARCH THE PLACE! HOW DO YOU KNOW THEY DON'T HAVE A STASH IN THERE?
BECAUSE YOU CAN SMELL AN ACTIVE PROCESSING LAB A MILE OFF.
THOSE GUYS ARE WAITING FOR THE RAW MATERIAL, THE UNREFINED COCA PASTES.
MY SOURCES TELL ME THAT'S NOT DUE TO ARRIVE UNTIL TOMORROW NIGHT.
5

THEY'LL PROBABLY SWITCH TO ANOTHER LAB, NOW THAT YOU'VE SPOOKED THEM.
THEN IT'S NO BIG DEAL! WE'LL JUST LOCATE THEIR NEW DIGS AND BUST THEM WHEN THEY TAKE POSSESSION.
WRONG! I'LL LOCATE THE NEW LAB ALL BY MYSELF!
COME ON...
YOU'RE GOING HOME TO TELL BATMAN HOW YOU SCREWED UP TONIGHT!
TELL BRUCE WE HAVE TO TALK. I'LL STOP BY THE CAVE TOMORROW.
BRUCE...?
CAVE...?
HOW'D HE KNOW BATMAN'S NAME IS BRUCE?
WHO IS THIS GUY, NIGHTWING?!
WAYNE MANOR, THE HOME OF MILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY BRUCE WAYNE AND HIS WARD JASON TODD.
NIGHTWING WAS THE ORIGINAL ROBIN, JASON.

I NEVER TOLD YOU ABOUT DICK'S OTHER IDENTITY BECAUSE I FELT IT WAS HIS SECRET.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE MR. GRAYSON HAS DECIDED TO SPILL THE BEANS, SO...
GOT ANY IDEA WHAT HE WANTS?
MAYBE.
HE DOESN'T...
...LIKE MAYBE WANT...
...HIS OLD JOB BACK...
...DOES HE?
NO. DICK'S TOUR OF DUTY AS ROBIN IS A THING OF THE PAST.
HE'S GOT A NEW LIFE AND DESTINY.
I IMAGINE WHAT HE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IS PERSONAL.
YOU BETTER GET SHOWERED AND OFF TO SCHOOL.
I'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT.
7



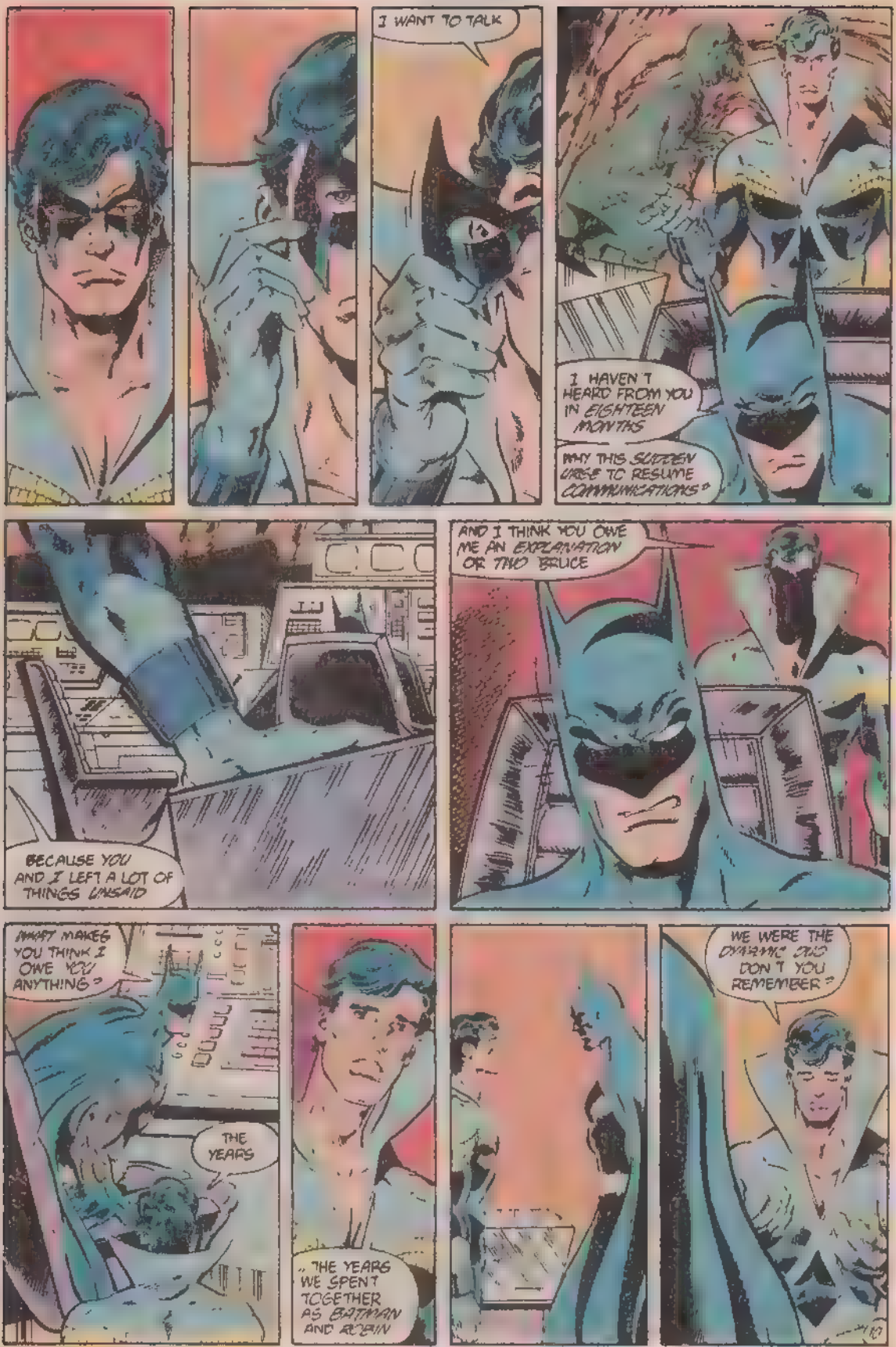


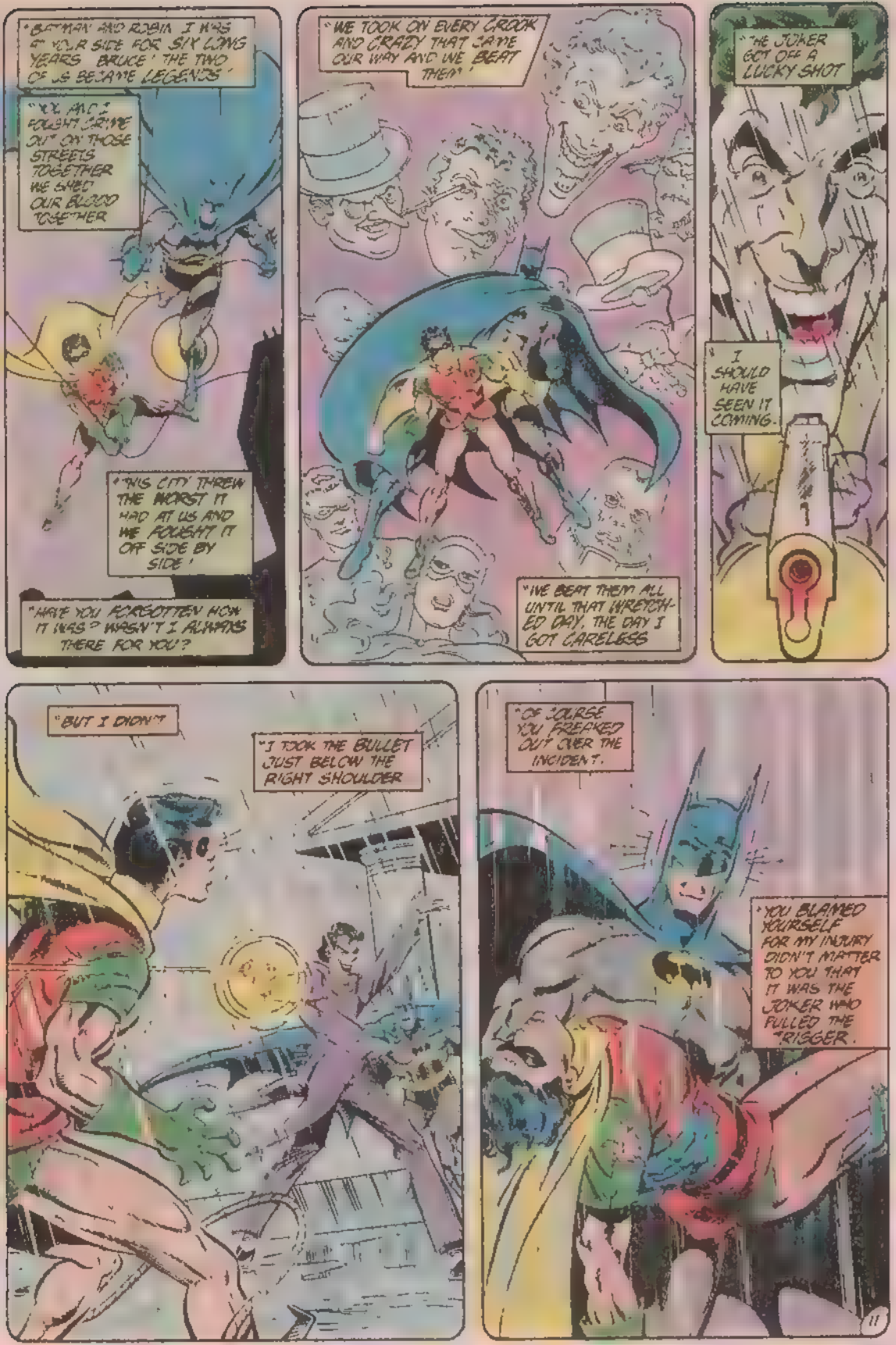

DICK ARRIVES SHORTLY AFTER JASON LEAVES FOR SCHOOL.
HIS SMOKE-GLASSED SEDAN PULLS INTO THE BATCAVE AS IF IT BELONGS THERE.

I FIND THAT ANNOYING.
GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, ALFRED.
HOW YOU DOING?
AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED, MASTER DICK.
HE'S WAITING FOR YOU IN THE TROPHY ROOM.
OF COURSE.
8

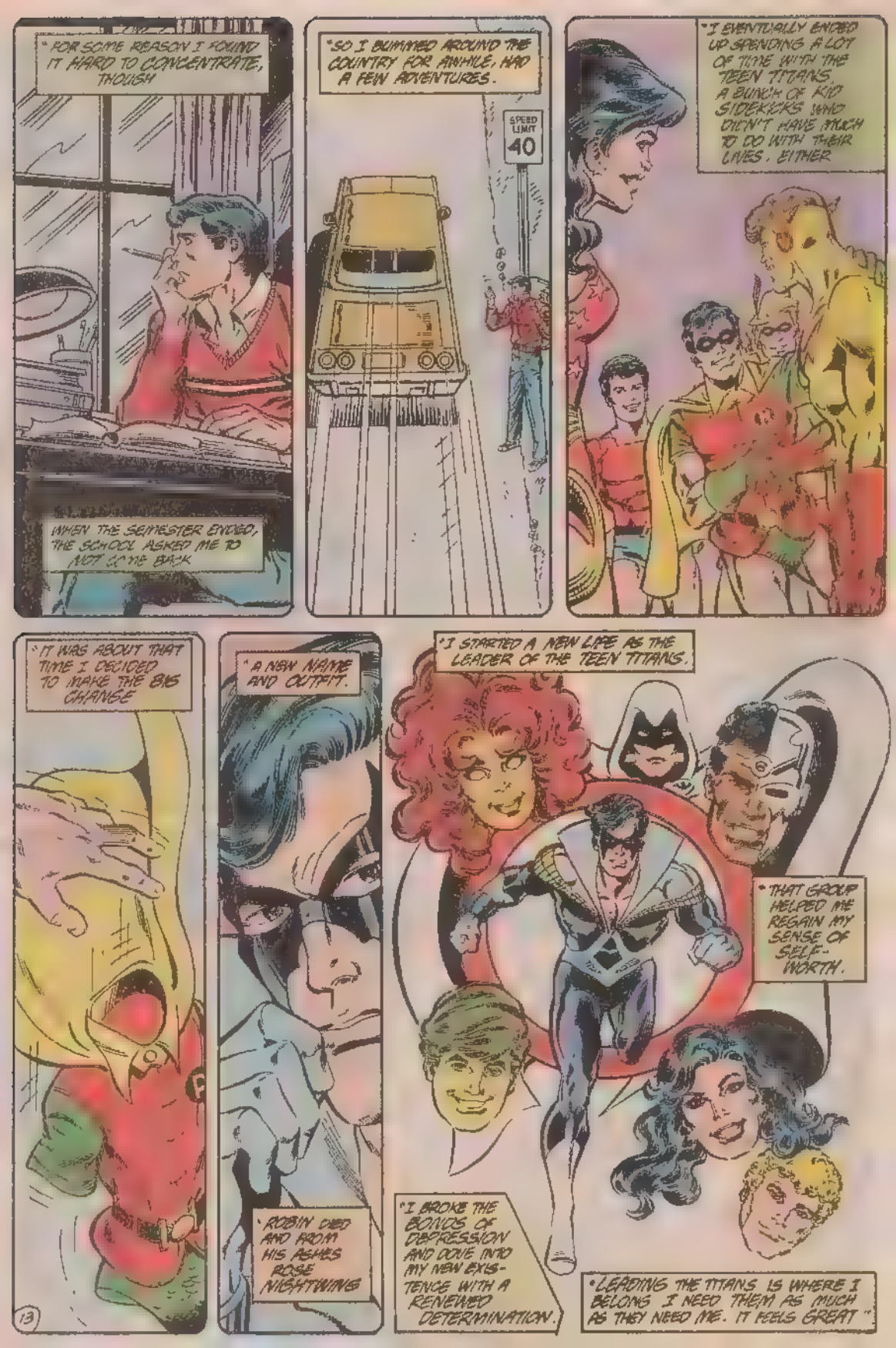
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON HIM, MASTER DICK.
HE'S ONLY HUMAN.
HI, BRUCE.
HELLO, NIGHTWING.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?


I WANT TO TALK
I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM YOU IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS
WHY THIS SUDDEN URGE TO RESUME COMMUNICATIONS?
BECAUSE YOU AND I LEFT A LOT OF THINGS UNSAID
AND I THINK YOU OWE ME AN EXPLANATION OR TWO BRUCE
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I OWE YOU ANYTHING?
THE YEARS
"THE YEARS WE SPENT TOGETHER AS BATMAN AND ROBIN
WE WERE THE DYNAMIC DUO DON'T YOU REMEMBER?


"BATMAN AND ROBIN. I WAS AT YOUR SIDE FOR SIX LONG YEARS. BRUCE. THE TWO OF US BECAME LEGENDS."
"YES, AND I FOUGHT CRIME OUT ON THOSE STREETS. TOGETHER WE SHED OUR BLOOD TOGETHER."
"THIS CITY THREW THE WORST IT HAD AT US AND WE FOUGHT IT OFF SIDE BY SIDE."
"HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW IT WAS? WASN'T I ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU?"
"WE TOOK ON EVERY CROOK AND CRAZY THAT CAME OUR WAY AND WE BEAT THEM."
"I'VE BEAT THEM ALL UNTIL THAT WRETCHED DAY, THE DAY I GOT CARELESS."
"THE JOKER GOT OFF A LUCKY SHOT."
"I SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT COMING."
"BUT I DIDN'T."
"I TOOK THE BULLET JUST BELOW THE RIGHT SHOULDER."
"OF COURSE YOU FREAKED OUT OVER THE INCIDENT."
"YOU BLAMED YOURSELF FOR MY INJURY. DIDN'T MATTER TO YOU THAT IT WAS THE JOKER WHO PULLED THE TRIGGER."

"SO WHILE I WAS STILL LAID UP IN BED, YOU DROPPED THE BAD NEWS ON ME NO LIFE, ANDS, OR BUTS..
"I WASN'T TO PLAY ROBIN ANYMORE YOU COULDN'T CONTINUE TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR A CHILD FIGHTING CRIME.
"FOR SIX YEARS YOU TRAINED ME TO BE A CRIME-FIGHTER, THEN DENIED ME THAT ROLE
"OF COURSE YOU ASSURED ME THAT IT WAS FOR MY OWN GOOD
"I LAY THERE WITH A BANDAGED SHOULDER AND MY LIFE IN RUINS
"YOU SMILED, KICKED A GREAT BIG HOLE IN MY LIFE, THEN WALKED OUT OF THE ROOM
"I DIDN'T SEE WHAT OPTION I HAD OTHER THAN TO SPLIT
"ALFRED TRIED TO TALK ME OUT OF IT
"IT WAS ALFRED WHO ROUSED MONEY ON ME SO I'D HAVE SOMETHING TO LIVE ON
YOU COULDN'T EVEN BE BOTHERED TO SAY GOOD-BYE"
I WAS INVOLVED WITH A CASE I DIDN'T.
SURE, BRUCE WHATEVER YOU SAY
HAVE YOU ANY INTEREST IN WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING SINCE I LEFT HERE?
UH... WELL..
I'LL TELL YOU ANYHOW
"DECIDED COLLEGE MIGHT BE MY BEST BET
"THOUGHT THAT MIGHT GIVE ME AN IDEA WHAT TO DO WITH THE REST OF MY LIFE
12


"FOR SOME REASON I FOUND IT HARD TO CONCENTRATE, THOUGH
WHEN THE SEMESTER ENDED, THE SCHOOL ASKED ME TO NOT COME BACK
"SO I BUMMED AROUND THE COUNTRY FOR AWHILE, HAD A FEW ADVENTURES.
SPEED LIMIT 40
"I EVENTUALLY ENDED UP SPENDING A LOT OF TIME WITH THE TEEN TITANS, A BUNCH OF KID SIDEKICKS WHO DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TO DO WITH THEIR LIVES, EITHER
"IT WAS ABOUT THAT TIME I DECIDED TO MAKE THE BIG CHANGE
"A NEW NAME AND OUTFIT.
"ROBIN DIED AND FROM HIS ASHES ROSE NIGHTWING
"I STARTED A NEW LIFE AS THE LEADER OF THE TEEN TITANS.
"THAT GROUP HELPED ME REGAIN MY SENSE OF SELF-WORTH.
"I BROKE THE BONDS OF DEPRESSION AND DOVE INTO MY NEW EXISTENCE WITH A RENEWED DETERMINATION.
"LEADING THE TITANS IS WHERE I BELONG. I NEED THEM AS MUCH AS THEY NEED ME. IT FEELS GREAT."
13

AS A GROUP WE'VE DONE PRETTY WELL FOR OURSELVES
I KNOW, I SAW YOUR GROUP IN ACTION WHEN THEY TEAMED UP WITH THE OUTSIDERS. REMEMBER?
YEAH, WELL IT LOOKED LIKE EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO WORK OUT OKAY
"WHEN ONE MORNING DURING BREAKFAST, MY WHOLE WORLD COMES CRASHING DOWN
"IT WAS QUITE A KICK FOR ME TO LEARN ABOUT THE NEW ROBIN IN THE NEWSPAPERS"
THE MAN WHO COULDN'T HANDLE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF HAVING A 12-YEAR OLD PARTNER SUDDENLY DECIDES IT'S ALL RIGHT TO TAKE ON A SIDEKICK.
I THINK I HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHY
THAT'S NOT AN EASY QUESTION TO ANSWER
WELL, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE OFF THAT DAMN MASK AND GIVE IT A TRY!

THE TRUTH IS, NIGHTWING I TAUGHT YOU EVERYTHING I COULD
IT WAS TIME FOR YOU TO STEP OUT ON YOUR OWN
SO YOU FIGURED THE BEST THING TO DO WAS DRIVE ME OUT OF YOUR LIFE RIGHT?
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU DO TO ANYONE WHO GETS TOO CLOSE TO YOU BRUCE!
ALWAYS HURT THEM BEFORE THEY GET THE CHANCE TO HURT YOU!
IT DIDN'T MATTER TO YOU THAT I DIDN'T HAVE ANY LIFE OTHER THAN THE ONE WE SHARED
YOU'RE REALLY SOME PIECE OF WORK AREN'T YOU?
15

WHY THE NEW KID?
HIS NAME'S JASON. HIS IS AN UNUSUAL STORY
"HE WAS BOOSTING THE WHEELS OFF THE BATMOBILE THE FIRST TIME I MET HIM
"I TRIED TO HELP HIM OUT BY SETTING HIM UP IN A SPECIAL SCHOOL FOR TROUBLED YOUTHS
"THAT DIDN'T WORK OUT
"LATER ON, HE HELPED ME ON A CASE.
"HE HANDLED HIMSELF QUITE WELL THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I TOOK HIM ON.
"ANOTHER REASON IS BECAUSE HE'S SO FULL OF MISGUIDED ANGER AND FRUSTRATION
"HE REMINDS ME OF MYSELF JUST AFTER MY PARENTS WERE KILLED"
I REALLY BELIEVE THAT IF LEFT ON HIS OWN, THE BOY WOULD BE DEAD BY NOW
HARD TIMES HAVE GIVEN HIM NO GREAT ABUNDANCE OF SELF-ESTEEM.
TRAINING HIM TO BE ROBIN HAS CHANNELED THOSE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE ENERGIES TOWARD A MORE POSITIVE GOAL.
IN MY OWN WAY, I THINK I MAY HAVE SAVED JASON'S LIFE
16

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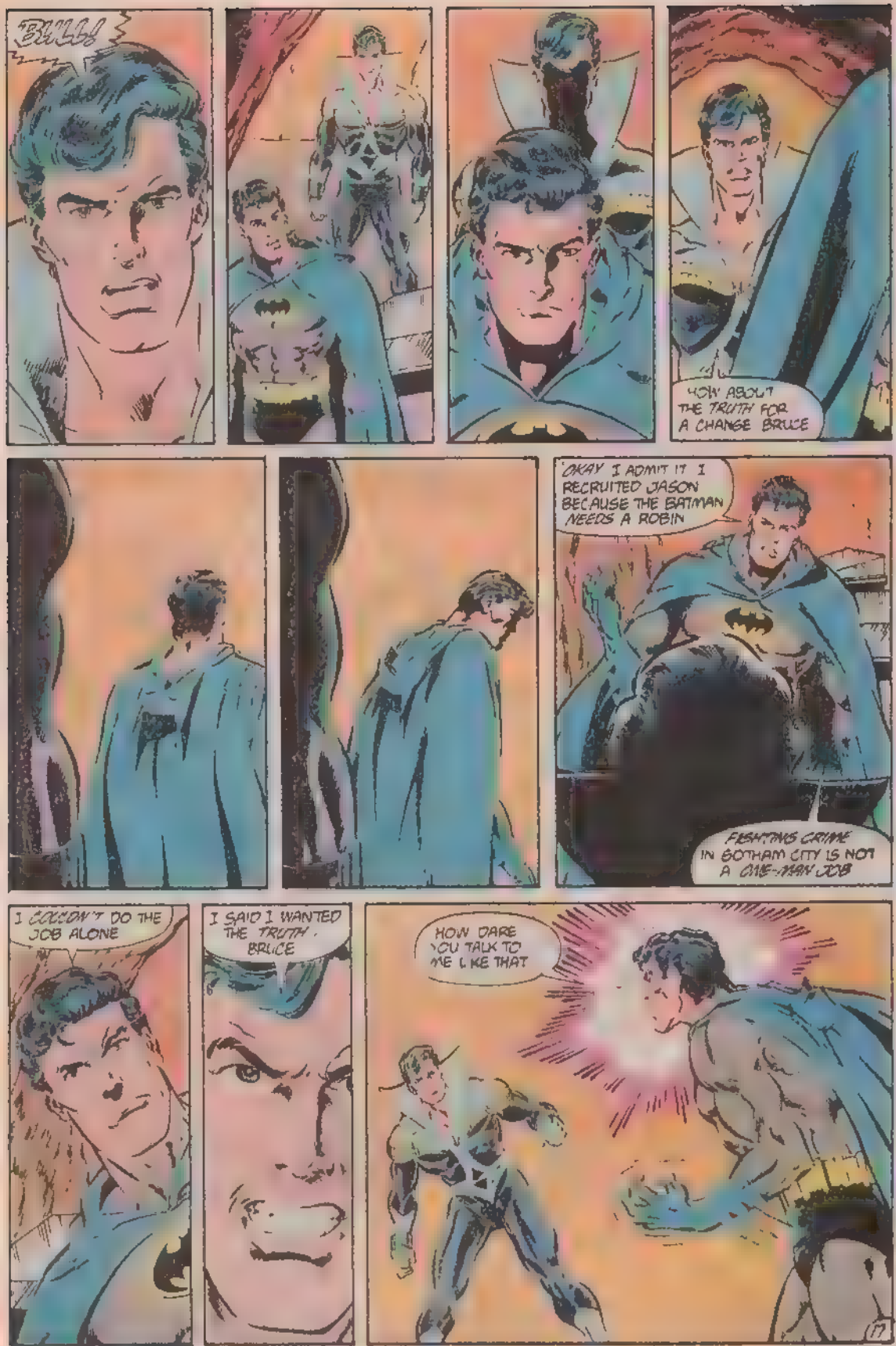
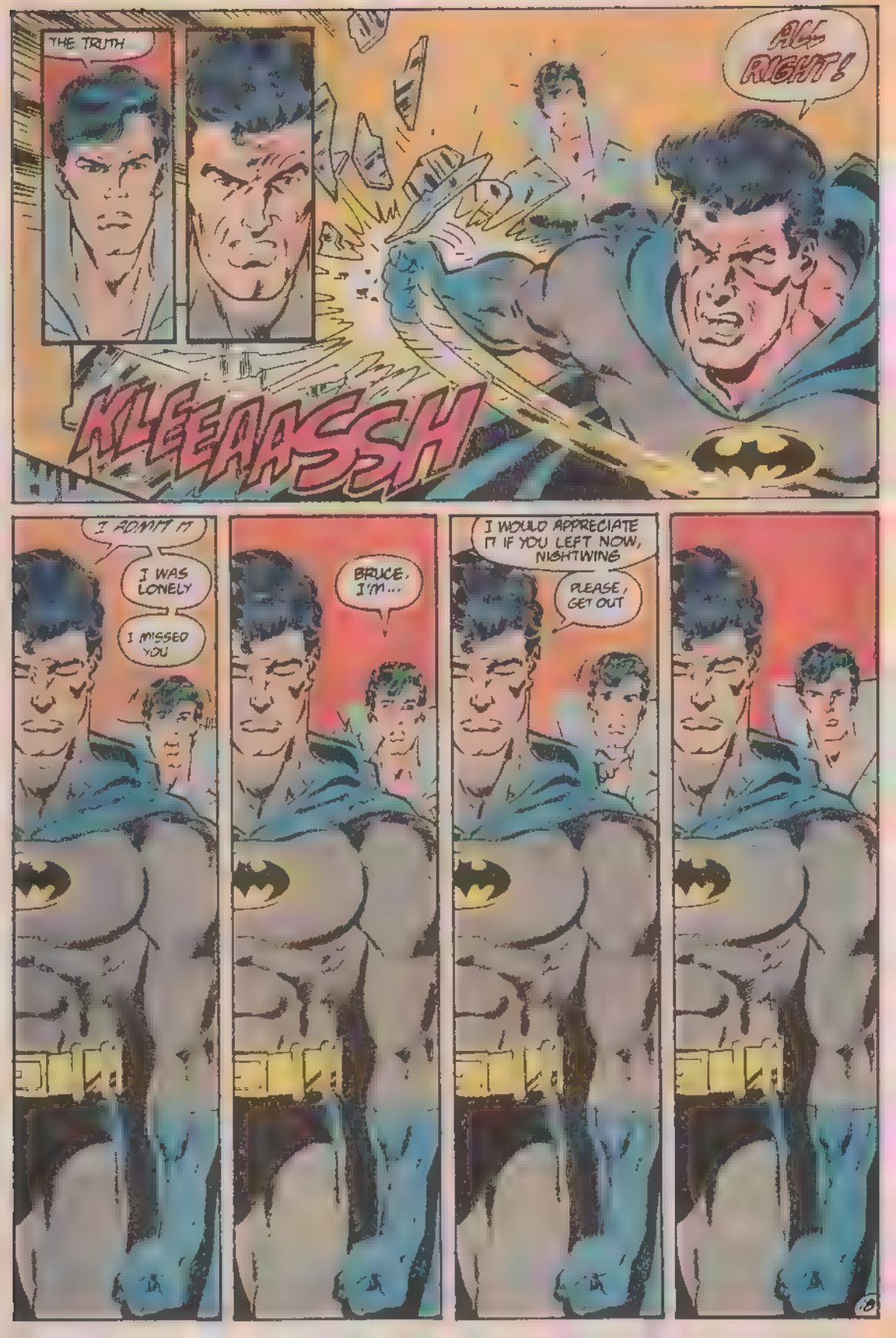
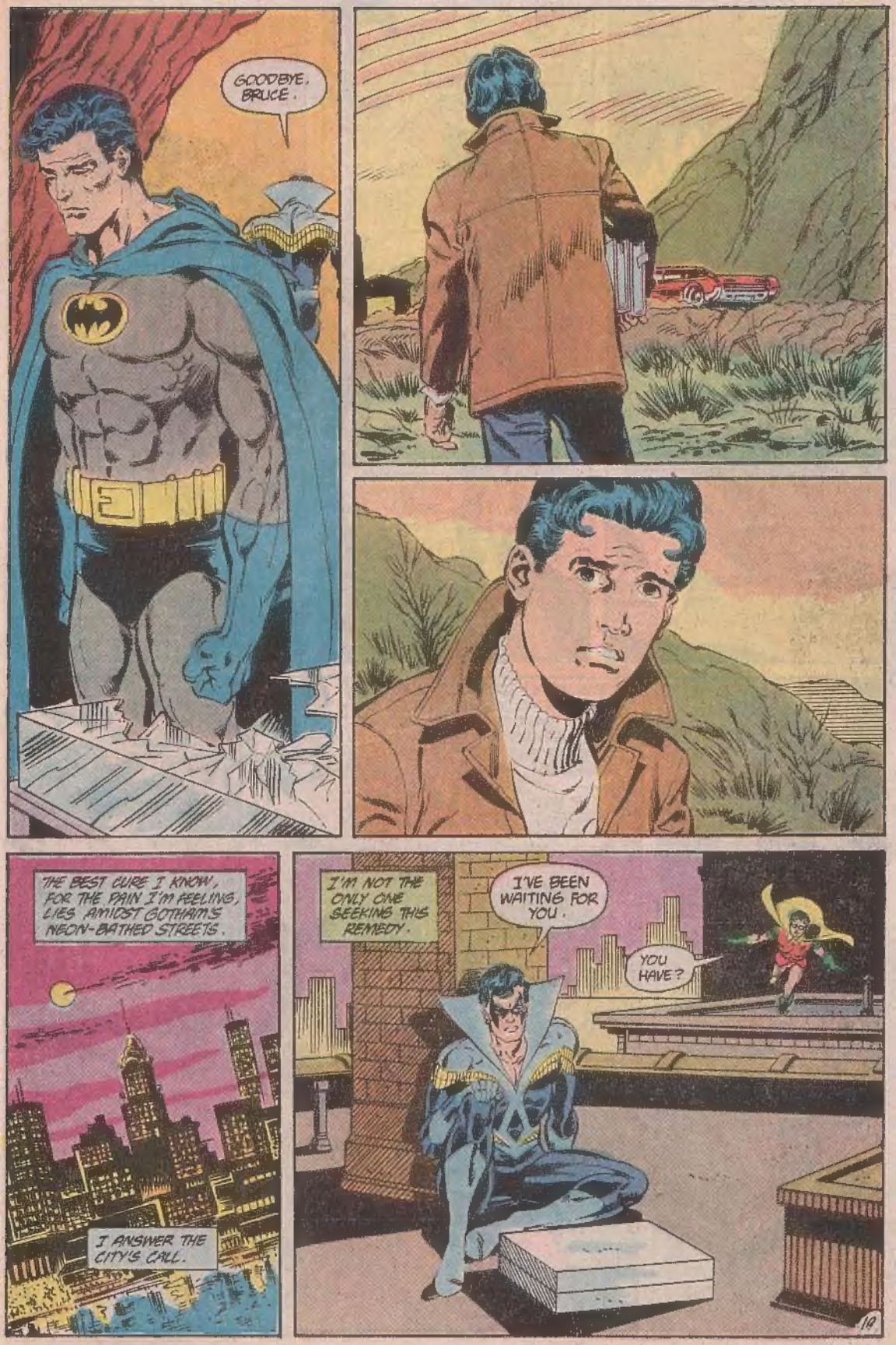

BULL!
HOW ABOUT THE TRUTH FOR A CHANGE BRUCE
OKAY I ADMIT IT I RECRUITED JASON BECAUSE THE BATMAN NEEDS A ROBIN
FIGHTING CRIME IN GOTHAM CITY IS NOT A ONE-MAN JOB
I COULDN'T DO THE JOB ALONE
I SAID I WANTED THE TRUTH, BRUCE
HOW DARE YOU TALK TO ME LIKE THAT
17

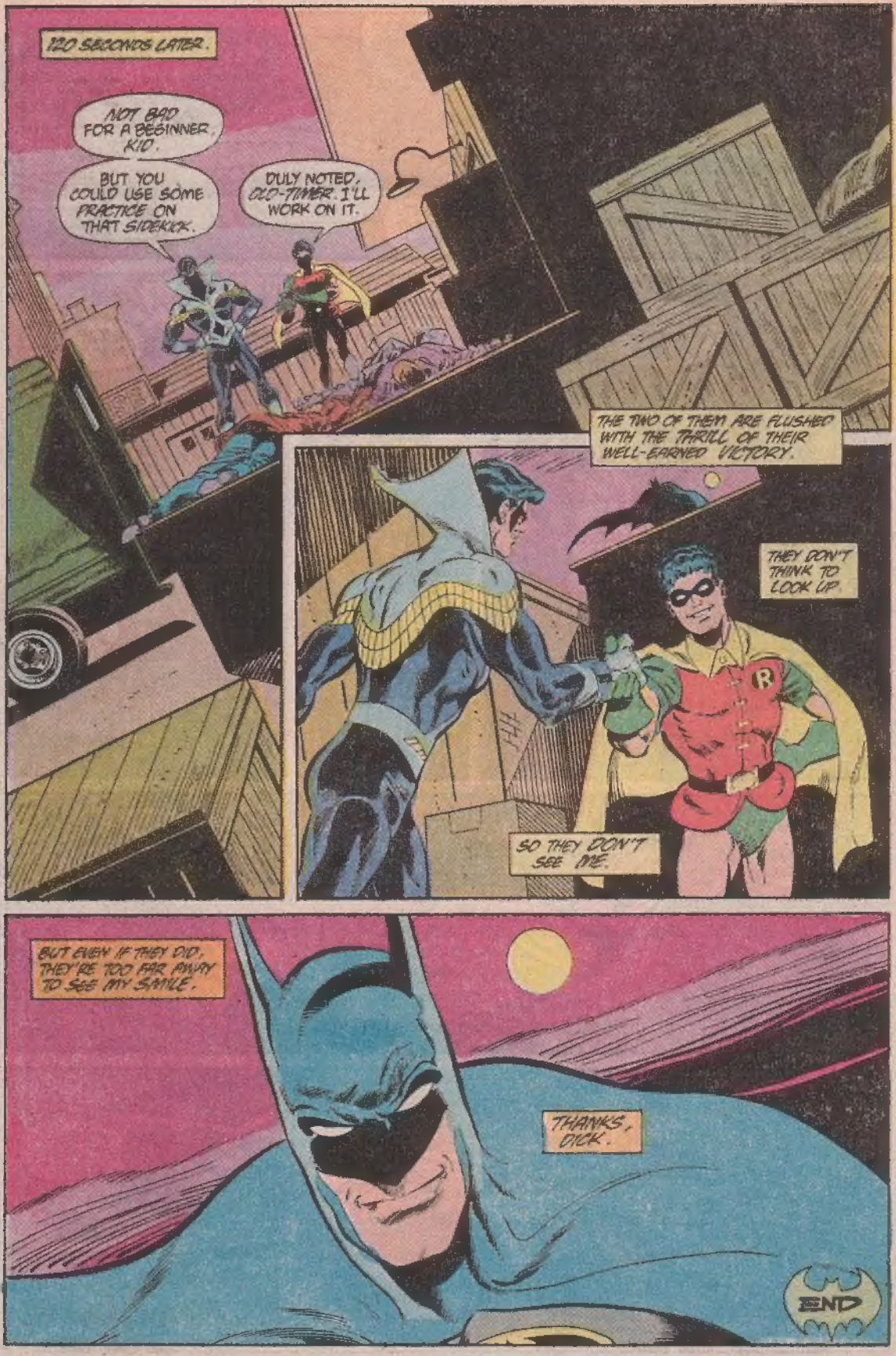

THE TRUTH
ALL RIGHT!
KLEEAASSH
I ADMIT IT
I WAS LONELY
I MISSED YOU
BRUCE, I'M...
I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU LEFT NOW, NIGHTWING
PLEASE, GET OUT


GOODBYE, BRUCE.
THE BEST CURE I KNOW, FOR THE PAIN I'M FEELING, LIES AMIDST GOTHAM'S NEON-BATHED STREETS.
I ANSWER THE CITY'S CALL.
I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE SEEKING THIS REMEDY.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
YOU HAVE?
10

YEAH, I FIGURED YOU'D FIND THIS NEW LAB.
WHAT SAY WE BUST IT TOGETHER?
SURE.
BUT BEFORE WE DO THAT, WHY DON'T YOU OPEN THIS.
WHAT IS IT?
SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO YOU.
I'VE NO NEED FOR IT ANY LONGER.
YOU'LL GROW INTO IT IN A FEW YEARS.
THERE'S GOING TO BE TIMES WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO TALK TO SOMEONE. CALL ME AT THIS NUMBER.
I'VE BEEN WHERE YOU'RE AT AND I'M A GOOD LISTENER.
THANKS. BRUCE IS NOT MUCH OF A TALKER.
I KNOW. THAT'S HIS BIGGEST PROBLEM.
DON'T LET IT BE YOURS.
20

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

SO HOW ABOUT WE GO ROUST SOME BAD GUYS?
RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
LOOKS LIKE THE SHIPMENT'S ALL HERE.
LET'S UNLOAD IT AND GET COOKING.
DON'T BOTHER.
IT'LL BE A LOT EASIER TO TRANSPORT IT ALL DOWN TO POLICE IMPOUND IF YOU JUST LEAVE IT IN THE TRUCK.
IT'S THE PUNK FROM THE OTHER NIGHT!
WASTE HIM!
THESE GENTS ARE IN NEED OF SOME ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, MR. NIGHTWING!
SHALL WE OBLIGE THEM?
ADJUST AWAY, MR. ROBIN!


120 SECONDS LATER.
NOT BAD FOR A BEGINNER, KID.
BUT YOU COULD USE SOME PRACTICE ON THAT SIDEKICK.
DULY NOTED, OLD-TIMER. I'LL WORK ON IT.
THE TWO OF THEM ARE FLUSHED WITH THE THRILL OF THEIR WELL-EARNED VICTORY.
THEY DON'T THINK TO LOOK UP.
SO THEY DON'T SEE ME.
BUT EVEN IF THEY DID, THEY'RE TOO FAR AWAY TO SEE MY SMILE.
THANKS, DICK.
END